Scholar speaks on Pakistani military-industrial complex

Published Tuesday, March 8, 2005

Using her native Pakistan as an example, Dr. Ayesha Siddiqa spoke of many nations' military-industrial complexes in her lecture entitled "Guns and Butter: Political Economy of Soldiers in Business," last night in the Cabot Intercultural Center.

In countries where the military has economic influence, the military has become a "stationary bandit, rather than a roaming bandit," and can use its political influence to procure unfair advantages in commerce.

Siddiqa said that in such cases, the military's attitude amounts to "I don't want just guns; I will take your butter as well."

Pakistan has large amounts of money for the military invested in businesses and real estate, but less active military officers working in the economic sector. According to Siddiqa, retired members of the military have many business advantages, especially when competing for government contracts.

The Pakistani military is also able to acquire private land and redistribute it for its own personnel, where military-owned construction and transportation companies monopolize service through preferential awarding of government grants.

In one area of Pakistan, according to Siddiqa, the military took control of a government road and began charging a road tax, something that Siddiqa said is, "clearly illegal" under Pakistani law. This ability to bypass laws stems from and increases the political influence of the military.

The real test of a military's pervasiveness in the economy is found by the examining the three layers of the military-industrial complex found in many countries.

The first layer comprises the actual organization of the military, the second includes all military foundations involved in the economy, and the third is the undocumented smaller ventures designed for fundraising.

All of these things can be found in Pakistan where there are over 90 military foundations providing a wide variety of goods and services. There are also undocumented ventures such as bakeries and gas stations, which are set up in communities where they are able to undercut local prices.

Additonally, the actual military possesses the two characteristics which Siddiqa said allows it to interfere in business. These are financial autonomy and capacity to redistribute resources

The Pakistani military possesses considerable financial autonomy and is able to use the principle of eminent domain-generally used in America during the creation of highways, or public buildings-to acquire public land and redistribute it to their personnel.

Currently, according to Siddiqa, the Pakistani military receives 10 percent of newly available land. The military received three million acres in 11 provinces in the last few years - just over 3.5 billion American dollars worth of property. As a result, there is less land for peasants to farm.

According to Siddiqa, this redistribution is mostly concentrated on the top ranks of the military, and rarely benefits the low-ranking officer.

Siddiqa said military officials in Pakistan will aggressively defend these types of actions, saying that their business ventures are more effective and successful than private ones, and that that they are trying to raise money to better care for their soldiers.

"Land as a resource in being monopolized," Siddiqa said.

Siddiqa said that the people like her who criticize this build-up are being dismissed as pseudo-intellectuals who don't understand the situation. But according to Siddiqa, the government denies many of the problems she made apparent in her speech.

"I, as a Pakistani analyst, cannot ignore this expansion, [as the] military begins to define its role in terms of defense and economics," Siddiqa said, adding that the military could begin to shift its focus to internal threats, such as terrorism

Siddiqa is a fellow in the Asian Program at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, and is the author of the book "Pakistan's Arms Procurement and Military Buildup, 1979-99."

TRENDING

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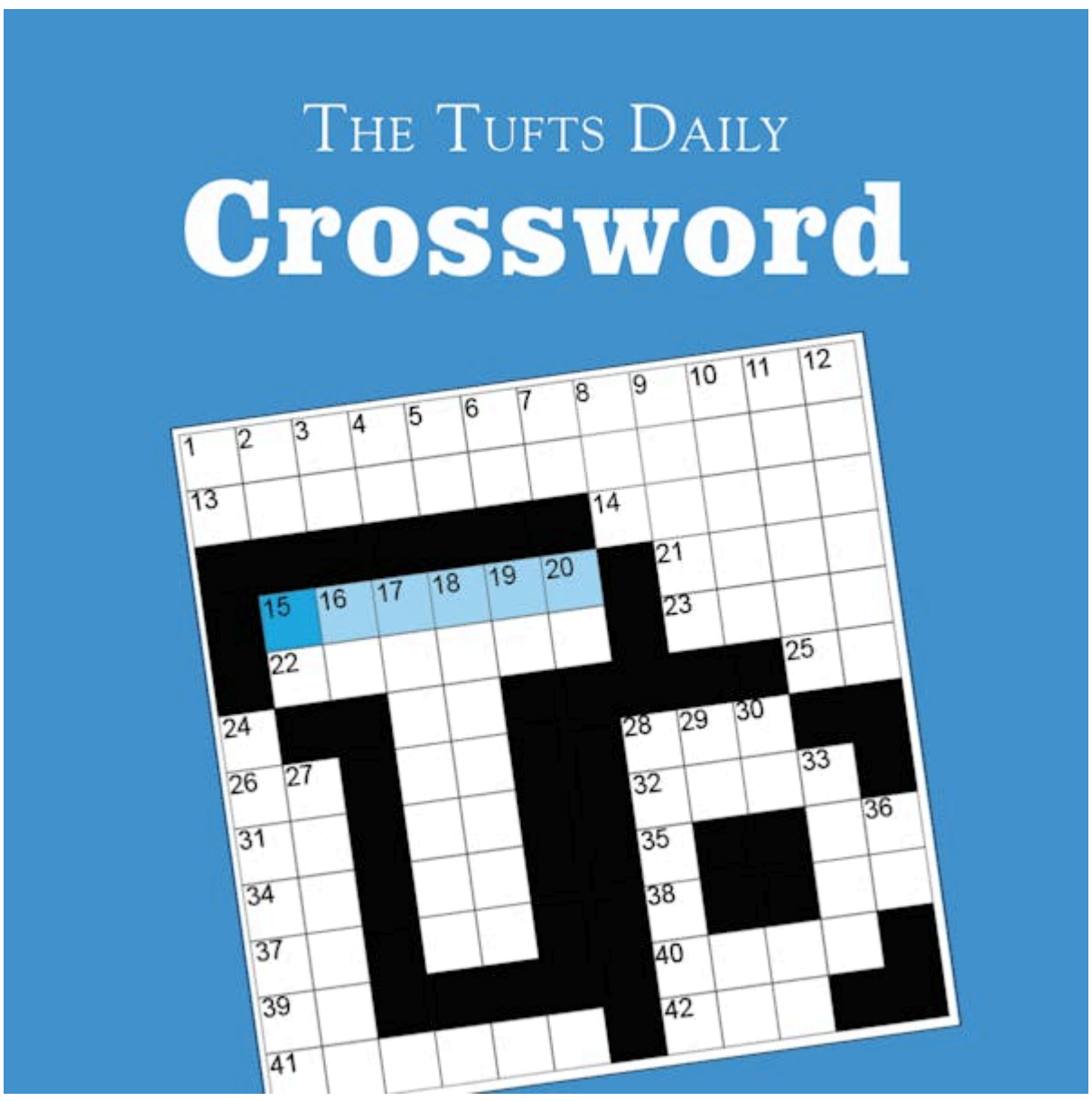

THE PRINT EDITION

The Tufts Daily

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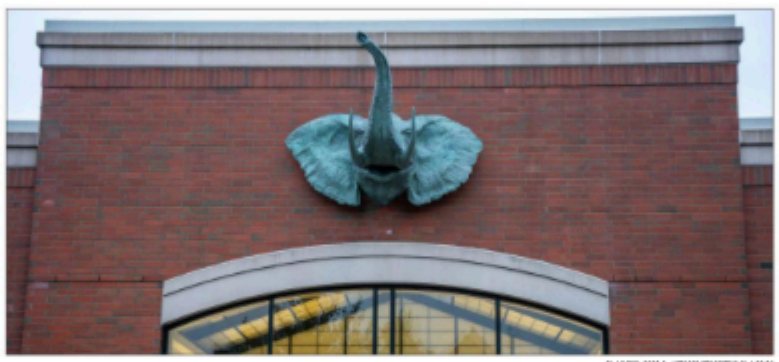
Tufts plans groups for orientation to foster community among first-years

Amelia Sammons
Assistant News Editor

Tufts is introducing changes to its undergraduate orientation next year, implementing a plan to place students into randomly assigned groups. The format will mimic that of the university's pre-orientation program and will be led by student leaders who will aim to provide a more welcoming and close-knit environment for new students through various events and bonding activities.

As part of the changes that began last year, students are being charged a $500 fee for orientation in addition to a $550 fee if they choose to participate in a Pre-O program. The funds will go, in part, towards paying next year's orientation leaders.


DAVID KIM / THE TUFTS DAILY
Dowling Hall is pictured.

Mary Kate Kelley, the director of Orientation and Student Experience, said the changes came as a response to student and family feedback from surveys that suggested a lack of connection during orientation.

"This [fee] is going to help sustain the student arrival experience changes we previously made, add more social programming, and create orientation leaders as a paid

see **COMMUNITY**, page 2

Blakeley Hall residents report ongoing maintenance, safety issues following renovation

Carlos Del Canal Fernandez and Zoe Herrmann
Contributing Writer and News Editor

Originally published Oct. 17.

Residents of Blakeley Hall, Tufts' newly renovated sophomore dorm, have reported a series of maintenance problems that have raised concerns about the building's safety and overall functionality.

Students report that recurring maintenance issues — including power outages, waterlogged ceilings and broken showers — have affected bathrooms on multiple floors.

ARIANNA HELLMAN / THE TUFTS DAILY
The Blakeley Hall courtyard is pictured on Sept. 29.

"There [were] times where there was no electricity in the bathrooms and there were no lights. It would happen for a couple days at a time and we would have to call somebody … it would be fixed for a couple hours and then it would happen again," Emma Rose, a sophomore living in Blakeley, said.

Tufts Construction Program Manager Christopher Hogan said efforts to remedy the issues were ongoing.

"The contractor is actively working to repair the showers and restore service in those rooms. 16 showers remain open for use in the building," Hogan wrote in a statement to the Daily.

Rose said that students were forced to use flashlights when using the toilets and showers on her side of the floor, or else go to the other side of the hallway. She added that maintenance workers were still taking measures to repair the damages caused by a leaking pipe from the second-floor bathroom.

"They fixed [a leak] pretty quickly, although right now

see **BLAKELEY**, page 4

TCU Senate discusses project updates, Treasury spending

Shayna Levy
Assistant News Editor

Originally published Oct. 22.

On Sunday, the Tufts Community Union Senate shared project updates from each General Board Committee and reviewed Treasury spending thus far.

TCU Treasurer Brendan French, a junior, shared a budget overview of how much money the Treasury has spent so far this school year. As of Sunday, the Treasury has spent $163,138 for on-campus events, off-campus events, new club budgets and equipment and supplies. The largest percentage of that has been spent on off-campus expenditures, which totals $112,925.

"We spend a lot when it comes to off-campus stuff, and that's kind of just the nature of things. Travel is expensive whenever people travel off-campus," French said.

TCU President Dhruv Sampat, a senior, shared updates regarding an upcoming meeting with Tufts' Athletic Director, where he plans to discuss issues for club sports, including gym size and financial barriers to participation.

He also mentioned plans for a new amenity within the Boston Avenue residential hall, which is currently under construction.

"They're hoping to put up a new gym in the new residential hall," Sampat said. "That's a new space that's coming."

Sophomore Spencer Kluger, chair of the Administration & Policy Committee, shared updates regarding ongoing projects, including the creation of a mail room dropbox for non-business hours.

"There's a lot of packages that are being left outside of the bookstore. It's not ideal. It could lead to theft," Kluger said. "It could lead to misplaced packages, rain damage, anything like that. [Our goal is] finding a way that we can

see **SENATE**, page 3

5 FEATURES
Summer Scholars soar

10 ARTS & POP CULTURE
Aca-awesome a cappella

13 OPINION
Sips at The Sink

16 SPORTS
Soccer stays scoreless

NEWS 1
FEATURES 5
ARTS & POP CULTURE 10
FUN & GAMES 12
OPINION 13
SCIENCE 15
SPORTS 16

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